

Especially during periods of national budgetary constraints affecting the bottom lines of States and local governments, the Byrne JAG grants are particularly important. Across our Nation, many jurisdictions, to shore up their budgets, are actually laying off police officers. When many of our citizens are experiencing economic hardship, we must not add to their burden by allowing public safety to suffer.

H.R. 6062 reaffirms the Federal Government's commitment to assisting State and local governments in their effort to prevent and fight crime. But reauthorization of the Byrne JAG grant program is obviously just a first step. We must also follow through with actually appropriating sufficient funds for the program.

In addition, we should encourage allocation of grant funds to the full range of programs that State and local governments are allowed to fund. Under current law, State and local governments may use Byrne JAG funding for programs or projects that improve law enforcement efforts; prosecution and court programs; prevention and education programs; corrections and community corrections; drug treatment programs; planning, evaluation, and technology projects; and crime victim and witness programs.

Each of these are essential to a comprehensive effort to protect us from crime, and, therefore, all of them should receive significant funding under the Byrne JAG grant program. An imbalance in justice assistance funding creates an imbalance in anticrime efforts. Specifically, an appropriate amount of funding should be allocated to prevent crime, which will help reduce the amount of money needed to fund the after-crime cost of investigation, prosecution, incarceration, and victim assistance.

We must also assist State and local governments to fund public defender programs in recognition of the fact that the public is also protected from injustice when we safeguard the Sixth Amendment rights of our citizens.

Finally, it is essential that the full range of other programs that assist State and local public safety initiatives, including the COPS program, are adequately funded. The COPS program has funded the hiring of more than 123,000 State and local police officers and sheriff's deputies in communities across our Nation, and it has been proven to be extremely effective in reducing crime.

□ 2040

I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 6062, and I commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) for his work on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of H.R. 6062 so that we can reaffirm our commitment to funding public safety programs, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time as well.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank my colleague from Virginia for yielding me the time.

I just want to reiterate what Mr. SCOTT just said. I have to say I have never had more requests and concern about programs from mayors and elected officials in my municipalities than I get for programs like this Byrne JAG program, like the COPS program, like the SAFER program that deals with fire prevention.

I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that many of my towns—and I'm sure this is true across the country—because of the recession, because of budgetary constraints are laying off police, laying off firemen, don't have the resources, if you will, to deal with a lot of the crime prevention problems, so these programs are crucial to them.

I want to reiterate what Mr. SCOTT said about the fact that right now it's not only a question of reauthorizing, but also making sure that there's adequate funding for it. If I could just use an example in my own district, and that is that last week I was able to announce that several towns in my district, the Sixth District, have been awarded grants under the Byrne JAG program to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime. One grant is administered by Neptune and is benefiting both Asbury Park and Long Branch—Long Branch being my home town. Another grant is administered by New Brunswick, and it's helping Perth Amboy, Edison, and Woodbridge.

The funding is used to purchase law enforcement equipment and supplies. In New Brunswick, it's being used for a police vehicle, which will have mobile video and data equipment. This is really all about community safety, which is of utmost importance. At a time when our local law enforcement has to cope with difficult funding levels, these Federal grants make it possible for towns to support critical crime-prevention activities that protect New Jersey families and their residents. I can't stress enough how important this is.

So I'm just very pleased today that on a bipartisan basis we are reauthorizing this, I think, for 5 years. And as Mr. SCOTT said, the next step is to make sure that there's adequate funding because this is a crucial program. That's why I came down here tonight to speak about it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6062.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6169, PATHWAY TO JOB CREATION THROUGH A SIMPLER, FAIRER TAX CODE ACT OF 2012; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 8, JOB PROTECTION AND RECESSION PREVENTION ACT OF 2012; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS FROM AUGUST 3, 2012, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 7, 2012; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES; AND WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-641) on the resolution (H. Res. 747) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6169) to provide for expedited consideration of a bill providing for comprehensive tax reform; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 8) to extend certain tax relief provisions enacted in 2001 and 2003, and for other purposes; providing for proceedings during the period from August 3, 2012, through September 7, 2012; providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules; and waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES ALLOCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2012

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1550) to establish programs in the Department of Justice and in the Department of Homeland Security to help States that have high rates of homicide and other violent crime, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1550

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Federal Law Enforcement Personnel and Resources Allocation Improvement Act of 2012".